

Monday, May 20, 2013  
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## All aboard the mothership



Bury College has been giving Bolton mums the opportunity to study while they look after their children. Back, from left: Samantha and Lacey Norris, 2; Natalie Davies and Caysey Brooks, 2; and Amy and Olivia Mason, 3 (centre). Front, from left: Bethany Sutton and Grace Bowling, 1; and Chelsea and Lyla Stringfellow, 2. See page 12

Supermarket sweep for NCG



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Tristram Hunt interview



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Q&A with Ann Limb



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inside...

## The K College catalogue

Eleanor Radford

@EleanorRadford

The provision, debts and estate of a debt-ridden Kent college being split up and sold off in pieces have been laid bare in a catalogue for what has been described as the first sale "of its kind in the UK".

The full extent of the debts — and assets — at K College are listed in a sales prospectus from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), Education Funding Agency (EFA) and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

It lists a fixed-rate loan of £10m with maturity in 2038 and a shorter-term loan of £2.9m at the college's Tonbridge site; a fixed-rate loan of £1.8m at its Ashford site and a fixed-

rate loan of £500,000, both maturing in 2024.

Seven parts are on offer: There's 16 to 19 provision in Dover, Folkestone, or Ashford, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells grouped together; apprenticeship and 19+ provision in Dover, Folkestone, or, again, Ashford, Tonbridge and Tunbridge together; or HEFCE directly-funded provision at Ashford and Tonbridge.

Fifty providers have already signed up to attend open days, on May 22 and 23, at two of the college's five campuses.

Principal Phil Frier said: "There is a lot of interest from other colleges, training providers and universities in bidding for the work currently operating across all five towns.

"This is great news and ensures

the continuation of the college's provision for the foreseeable future.

"This open competition signifies a bright future for both students across Kent and our own staff."

The break-up comes after the college, formed following a merger between West Kent College and South Kent College in 2010, ran up multi-million pound debts and was issued with a notice of concern by the SFA.

Mr Frier later conceded that the merger, which took place before he was in post, hadn't worked and proposed splitting the college in two.

He suggested one half should incorporate the Dover and Folkestone campuses; the other Ashford, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells.

The proposal was approved by Skills Minister Matthew Hancock

after an independent review.

The college will continue until July next year when its work will be taken over and renewed by a new provider or providers.

Bidders will "need to demonstrate" they had taken into account the "financial liabilities" set out in the prospectus, which also outlines conditions for repayment of SFA advances. It asks potential bidders if they're interested in either provision only or provision and assets [buildings].

The chief executive of the SFA, with the EFA, will lead the tendering process — described by a K College spokesperson as the "first competition of its kind" in an FE college — and will decide winning bids.

The first open day is in Tonbridge site. The second is in Folkestone.

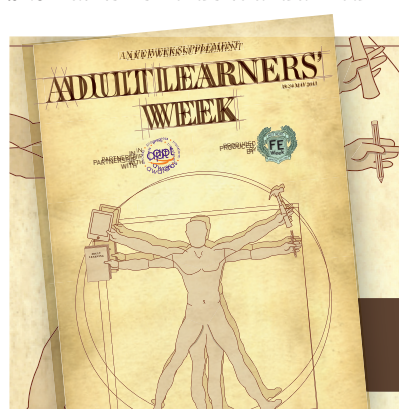
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# ADULT LEARNERS' WEEK

18-24 MAY 2013

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Edition 67

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Top Adult Learners' Week (#ALW13) tweets:

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The Merseyside #ALW13 event on 24th May has over 50 learning providers offering info and activities. World Museum Liverpool — Free entry

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Learn how to use a scanner to copy and send documents at Belgrave Library 22nd May 10am – 1pm

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Speak Croatian in 60 minutes? Can it be done? Find out on Wednesday [May 22] at Leigh Library

@CathyReadsBooks  
Excited to be going to House of Commons for #ALW13 reception, then on to a book club at Watford library to chat @Quick\_Reads

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Our latest paper asks Government to invest more to 2020 & stimulate/enable employers & individuals to invest more in learning. #ALW13

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# Principal leaves after Ofsted blow

Chris Henwood

@Chris\_Henwood

The principal of City College Coventry is to leave his job after the Skills Funding Agency demanded "fundamental changes" following a disastrous Ofsted inspection report.

After 16 years in post and two previous poor inspections, Paul Taylor (pictured) was hit with grade four (inadequate) results across each inspection headline field last month.

He is to be replaced as soon as an interim principal can be found.

It was unclear whether he has decided to leave or was asked to go, but the agency said it had called for change at the top of the 8,000-learner college.

"We have made it clear through the issue of a notice of concern, that an improvement plan that does not include fundamental changes to leadership and governance will not be acceptable," said an agency spokesperson.

"We will consider and discuss next steps with the college."

The statement leaves a questionmark hanging over the college's board of governors, including its chair since 2001, Warwick Hall.

However, a college spokesperson said she was "unaware of any changes planned for the board of governors".

Coventry's Ofsted report, published on April 23 following inspection in March, also gave grade fours throughout the main findings board, including apprenticeships and 19+ learning programmes.

Its highest mark was a single grade two for teaching, learning and assessment on independ-

ent living and life skills.

Mr Taylor had wanted to stay on despite the blow, saying: "If I walk away I'll regret it forever."

But a statement from the college read: "The decision has been taken that Paul Taylor is to leave his position as principal of City College Coventry.

"The board of governors led by the chair and with the support of the Skills Funding Agency and the Association of Colleges is seeking an interim principal. The aim is for the interim principal to be in post by July."

Meanwhile, Walsall College, among the first to be described as outstanding under Ofsted's new common inspection framework, and Yorkshire's Kirklees College, which got a good grading from Ofsted last year just 18 months after it too had been labelled inadequate, are to be involved in the bid to improve the Coventry college.

Mr Hall said: "There is much we can learn from the experience and performance of these two colleges.

"A year after its poor Ofsted report, Kirklees achieved a rating of good across every element of its operations, except leadership and management where it was rated outstanding. This is an achievement I want City College to emulate."

The Coventry college statement added that a performance improvement action plan was being implemented.

"We are also building a relationship with Walsall College, which has been rated as outstanding, through which it will benchmark its performance and improvement," it said.



## FE Week news in brief

### NAS defends website

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) has defended a newly-launched website aimed at putting employers in touch with providers.

The Association of Employment and Learning Providers had expressed concerns national providers could be left out of search results because of a mandatory fields for postcode and distance. But a NAS spokesperson said the post code fields tracked bases of apprentice employers, rather than providers.

"There is no issue," they said.

### New chief executive

A former Midland college director of community education is to become chief executive of the Network for Black Professionals.

Rajinder Mann OBE, who worked at Bilston Community College, takes over from Robin Landman OBE in July.

She is currently the executive director of the network's Black Leadership Initiative.

"It is a privilege to serve our members locally and nationally ensuring our voices are heard," she said.

### LSIS workshops

Two free workshops are being run by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service aimed at boosting the number of disabled apprentices. They are being put on with Remploy Employment Services, provider of specialist employment support for disabled and disadvantaged people, and will look at issues deterring employers and colleges from recruiting disabled people to apprenticeships.

The workshops are due to take place on May 20 in Leicester and May 23 in Newcastle. Visit [www.lsis.org.uk](http://www.lsis.org.uk) for more details.

# Rethink call on traineeship rules

Chris Henwood

@Chris\_Henwood

The leader of a group representing 27 large colleges has called on the government to loosen rules on who can run traineeships.

Skills Minister Matthew Hancock announced the traineeships framework this month — just weeks after youth unemployment figures nudged the one million mark — along with rules governing who can offer the scheme.

The scheme, first proposed by Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg in June to help young people gain work-related skills and attitudes, is due to start next academic year.

It will include work placements of up to six months, flexible training to build character and to help young people get ready for work — such as job search and interview skills, time-keeping and team working — and will develop learners' English and maths.

However, providers without an Ofsted grade one (outstanding) or two (good) will not be able to run the scheme in its first year.

Lynne Sedgmore (pictured), executive

director of the 157 Group, which represents '27 large and successful colleges', which includes a number at Ofsted grade three, said: "We are concerned at the proposal to use a college's overall Ofsted grade as the only criteria, and to only allow those colleges with good or outstanding ratings to deliver traineeships.

"We believe this approach will provide only a limited perspective as it does not reflect the full range and nuances of the varied grades, differences and aspects of college provision.

"We also believe that it may carry unintended consequences for the availability of traineeships within certain geographical areas, which could be mitigated by broadening the range of criteria applied."

She said that her group supported a broadening of the criteria to include evidenced quality, a strong track record and extensive experience of successful work-based learning, plus previous experience of delivering innovative programmes for NEETs and for the unemployed.

"We would also like to see evidence of powerful endorsement and high levels of confidence from employers taken into account,

along with strong strategic partnerships with local employers and a strong track record of effective work experience," she said.

Joy Mercer, director of policy at the Association of Colleges, said: "We've already raised this with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and are pleased the eligibility criteria will be for this year in the first instance.

"An Ofsted judgment is a blunt instrument that can hide excellent provision for this targeted group of students and nationally renowned provision with employers."

The government's traineeship framework document said that if there was no eligible provider in a location, it would support efforts to "ensure that outstanding and good provision becomes available in that area".

The government has also said that only 16 to 19-year-olds could take traineeships.

Mrs Sedgmore added that the 157 Group was "fully supportive" of the new framework and its "many positive elements", including content flexibility, partnerships with employers and meaningful work experience.

But it was keen to see the scheme extended to 19 to 24-year-old and "fully accepted" the



need for quality criteria and clarity for existing providers and new entrants. "We firmly believe that FE colleges will be critical to the successful delivery of traineeships," she said.

A government spokesperson said: "We are announcing the 16 to 19 framework so that delivery of traineeships for this age group will be possible from the start of the 2013/14 academic year.

"We are looking to extend the traineeships programme to young people up to 24."

## Commissioner spec 'prejudices' FE hopefuls

Chris Henwood

@Chris\_Henwood

College leaders hoping to play a part in the FE Commissioner hit squad have been put "at a disadvantage" by the job's specifications.

The deadline for applications to the post, along with its seven advisory posts, ended last week.

But the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) and its leadership arm, the Association of Managers in Education, questioned the requirements of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Department for Education.

The departments wanted candidates registered on the National College for Teaching and Leadership's operational associate framework so they could issue a request for quotation.

But an ATL spokesperson said this could stifle applications from FE staff.

"The invitation to bid through a request for quotation and the requirement to be registered on the framework will prejudice applications from anyone in FE who hasn't already set up a limited company — which is ridiculous, given the nature of the role," they said.

They said the framework was established to save money and to ensure that consultants were not working regularly enough for the taxman to consider them full-time employees.

The spokesperson added: "Even if FE staff have formed a limited company, it will still take a few days to fast-track their application to join the framework.

"This means college leaders will be at a disadvantage, compared with the many national lead-

ers of education, etc, who are already registered and ready to respond to the request to quote."

But a BIS spokesperson said individuals were not required to be set up as a limited company.

They could register against a company, school, college or university, said the spokesperson, adding that if an organisation was not already included on the framework, potential applicants could register their organisation's profile on the system.

Skills Minister Matthew Hancock announced the FE Commissioner plans last month as part of the government's Rigour and Responsiveness in Skills strategy.

The strategy said a commissioner would be sent into colleges graded inadequate by Ofsted; in financial trouble; or failing to hit learner success targets. They could call for institutions to be given administered college status, thereby losing powers such as staff changes and expenditure, and could recommend governors be kicked out. Ultimately, they could call for a college to be dissolved.

Lynne Sedgmore, 157 Group executive director, said a team of eight seemed "reasonable", but she, along with the ATL, questioned the departments' call for candidates to be registered against broker and practitioner skills frameworks.

"The detail of what the skills frameworks actually entail is slightly elusive," she said. "We wonder whether there is anything more specific about social impact and responsibility?"

A BIS spokesperson said: "The FE Commissioner's appointment and that of the advisers is being managed through the National College for Teaching and Leadership's e-procurement system.

"We alerted representative bodies and those who had expressed a direct interest to the process and included an article in the FE and skills newsletter, giving interested individuals more than a week to register on the operational framework."

# NUS gets some learner satisfaction

Eleanor Radford

@EleanorRadford

The lack of learner presence within a new FE body that will set professional standards across the sector has now been taken "seriously", the National Union for Students' president-elect has told FE Week.

Toni Pearce spoke out after a union-led discussion on learner engagement at the most recent steering group meeting for the FE Guild. She has now been invited to present a paper to the guild's board.

Last month FE Week reported how Ms Pearce called the new organisation's plan not to include learners on its board as "a bad April fool". Seats were set aside for the Association of Colleges, the Association of Employment and Learning Providers and the Association of Adult Education and Training Organisations (AAETO), which operates under the name HOLEX.

But Ms Pearce said it was "heartening" that dialogue had now begun between the union and the guild, which is due to launch in August.

"It is heartening that the guild has been willing both to hear our arguments and to take them seriously," she said.

"We're optimistic of further progress to



An FE Week cartoon from April when Toni Pearce expressed anger over the lack of a student voice in the guild's draft implementation plans

ensure the learner voice is heard."

David Hughes, chief executive of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) and chair of the guild steering group, said its commitment to ensuring learners had a strong voice was "clear".

"We have agreed that we will develop a joint paper that will ensure the learner voice is heard at the highest levels in the new guild, and this will be presented to the new board when it meets," he said.

"I look forward to continuing to work with the union."

Ms Pearce, currently NUS vice-president,

and Gemma Painter, NUS head of further education, delivered their paper, FE Guild Governance Arrangements: Involvement of Learners, to the steering group on May 7.

A guild spokesperson said Ms Pearce was also a "key figure" at a recent meeting at Windsor Castle where 27 delegates discussed how the guild would progress.

FE Week reported last month that the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills had confirmed funding, excluding VAT, of £18.8m for August to April next year, and the same figure again for 2014-15, to run the guild.

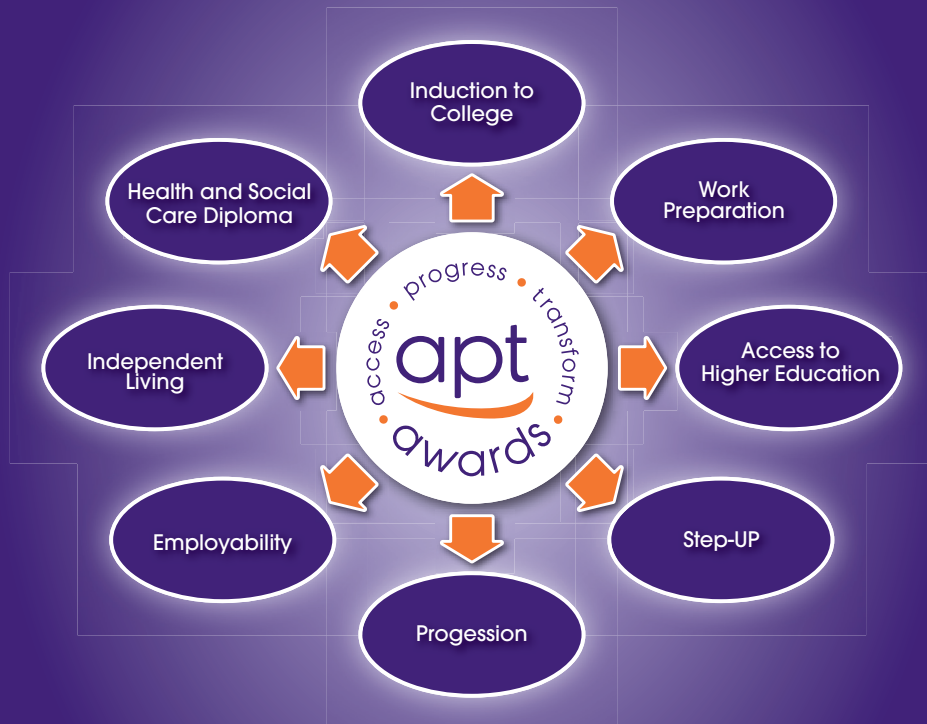
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## Introducing apt awards

the new trading name for Open College Network South West Region (OCNSWR)

Apt awards is an independent national Awarding Organisation, regulated by Ofqual to develop and offer national qualifications on the Qualifications and Credit Framework, and licensed by the QAA to award the Access to Higher Education Diploma.

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Editor’s comment

Voice of reason

It comes as welcome news that the FE Guild has revisited the issue of learner representation, and now could end up with a seat on its board for the voice of students.

Learner representation is critical to the credibility of the new body, and should also add value to its decisions.

After all, learners are the recipients of the FE service and so should have a central role in shaping proposals for improvement.

So I congratulate the NUS and representatives of the guild for being reasonable and putting their heads together for a rethink.

The result must be one in which the learner plays a role within the guild, with a voice that is listened to AND taken seriously.

Nick Linford, editor



College wins Morrisons’ contract

Chris Henwood

@Chris\_Henwood

The contract to deliver the country’s biggest apprenticeship programme has been won by NCG (formerly Newcastle College Group).

The Academy Apprenticeship and qualifications programme of supermarket giant Morrisons will change hands from current provider Elmfield to NCG from August.

The contract will be managed by the college’s Intraining division, which works with more than 20,000 businesses and trains 54,000 learners every year, including up to 20,000 apprentices.

It will deliver fully accredited and recognised apprenticeships in subjects such as business and administration; retail; warehousing and storage; and customer service.

Dame Jackie Fisher, NCG chief executive, said: “Developing people through learning is at the heart of everything we do. We are delighted to have the opportunity to work with Morrisons on such an innovative learning programme.

“We will use our expertise of working each year with 20,000 young people aged 18 or less to ensure young employees are quickly engaged and inspired to take part in learning.

“NCG is committed to developing high quality training and we intend to add to the Morrisons Academy to train the managers of the future so they can go from the shop floor to the ‘top floor’.

“As a not-for-profit organisation we understand the importance of making every penny count and have created a model that ensures funding will be reinvested into learners.”

Morrisons is expected to train around 10,000 apprentices each year through its academy, on courses that will take between one and two years to complete, with more than half focused on 16 to 24-year-olds.

Mickey Greenhalgh, Morrisons’ head of craft and functional skills, said: “We completed a tender of our Academy Apprenticeship programme, to ensure it continues to best support the development of our colleagues.

“I’m delighted that we’ll be working with NCG over the coming years to equip our people with the skills they need to deliver great service to our customers.

“The programme’s ambition is to develop our internal talent and will equip many of our shopfloor colleagues for a move into management and beyond.”

NCG is one of the largest education and training providers working with 100,000

learners every year at 45 locations nationwide. It was graded as good by Ofsted last summer and had an overall apprenticeship success rate for 2011/12 of 77.5 per cent with 5,910 leavers.

Intraining managing director Phil Bonell said: “We deliver tailored on-the-job learning that evolves with employer and market needs. We have developed industry leading capabilities to deliver the highest quality learning, using the latest technology.

“We have systems in place to develop content in house and our dedicated e-Learning team has a proven track record of delivering high quality innovative outputs to ensure learners successfully achieve their goals.”

David Way, executive director of the National Apprenticeship Service, said: “I am very pleased that Morrisons is ready to continue its investment in apprenticeships and is giving opportunities to many young people to begin their careers in retail.

“This commitment from Morrisons shows the importance that leading employers are placing on apprenticeships to drive their businesses forward.”

Morrisons announced in February that its three-year contract with Elmfield, which had an overall success rate of 58.5 per cent last year from 22,290 apprenticeship leavers, would end this year.

FE Week profile

Tristram Hunt ~ his story

Eleanor Radford

@EleanorRadford

The Shadow junior education minister talks to FE Week

A rich vein of history runs through Tristram Hunt, rising to the surface and touching everything he talks about.

The 38-year-old history graduate’s love for the Industrial Revolution, which spawned times of “great equality” across the UK because of the industrial power yielded by cities other than London, has informed his pro-manufacturing views.

He’s penned history books and broadcast history-based television programmes. And his main contact with the FE sector is when he teaches students in his Stoke-on-Trent constituency.

But it was the poverty that the Shadow junior education minister saw in Chicago during an exchange fellowship that fired his ambition to work with the Labour party.

“I went to Chicago for a year. The university is on the south side, which, when I was there, was a very hairy place,” he says.

“The levels of poverty and dysfunction were stark for a nice boy bought up in Cambridge.

“It was a bit of a political awakening. I came back and got involved.”

This was in 1997. He was 22 and volunteered during that year’s election campaign. He says that he liked the shape of the party under Tony Blair who he describes as an “attractive and modern, European figure”.

“Blair was great and inspirational when I was a young man,” says the MP who, as a student at the University of Cambridge, rubbed shoulders with stars such as Sacha Baron Cohen and became friends with comedy writers David Mitchell and Rob Webb, fellow members of university drama group, Footlights.

Hunt says present Labour leader Ed Miliband has “a very real passion for youth services and young people. It’s good to be working for him”.

But the father-of-three says more could be made of FE colleges.

“There’s a big resource that isn’t being utilised effectively — either locally or within broader skills strategy. Libraries are under great threat in many local authorities; you’ve got all these colleges with resources. Should we think about co-location for those kind of services?” he asks.

“The heart of it is in skills. What do local employers and businesses need in terms of skills provision? We know our skills capacity is poor at the moment. The good thing about FE colleges is they’re hooked in locally.

“There needs to be more in terms of their relationship with employers, businesses and industry but you want them as local drivers of skills.”

He says that localising budgets for skills and training through local enterprise partnerships, is “not a bad policy” but FE colleges need to “step up to that”.

“They’ve got to get the basics right,” says Hunt who lives between Stoke-on-Trent and North London with his textile designer wife, Juliet.

“We’re not where we need to be on English and maths. Forty per cent of kids don’t get level two at 16 in English and maths and only 20 per cent of that is achieved at 18. That 16 to 18 gap in terms of achievement is really worrying.

“Is the teaching capacity there? And is the focus there? There should greater focus on functional skills teaching. It’s increasingly important with the raising of the participation age . . . and it’s what employers want,” he says.

Hunt, who has two sisters, went to his local Cambridge primary until the family moved to North London, where his lecturer father took a job as a meteorologist. While his mother started work as a landscape architect, he moved on to University College School, an independent school, where teachers fostered his love of history.

“History is really important,” he says. “It’s one of the few academic syllabuses that everyone has a view on; it goes beyond its own perimeters because it’s about citizenship, national identity, understanding — it affects everyone. It’s even more important in a multi-ethnic age when you don’t have those traditional levers of understanding outside the classroom.”

He adds: “It’s also fun. Learning of human failures, achievements and weaknesses give a greater understanding of ourselves.”

He says that although he was politically aware as a youngster – his father Julian was a leader of the Labour group on Cambridge City Council and was made a lifelong peer in 2000 — he was not politically active through school or university. That came after his year in Chicago.

After completing a doctorate in civic thought, he returned on and off to the party in between presenting programmes on the English Civil War, the theories of Isaac Newton, and the rise of the middle class. He also appeared regularly on BBC Radio 4.

Yet despite all this, the former lecturer in modern history at Queen Mary, University of London, writer for the Observer and Guardian and, most recently, biographer of Friedrich Engels, says the “most stressful thing” he’s done is candidate selection.

“At elections you’re the candidate and you’ve got the machinery. If you lose, well you’ve lost, but in selections you’re in a struggle with your own side and it’s more edgy,” he says.

In 2007 and 2009 he failed to be selected for safe seats in Liverpool and Leyton and



Wanstead. When he was finally selected for Stoke-on-Trent in 2010, there was controversy over him being “parachuted in” at the last minute. He won by 5,566 votes.

“The consolations of history are rather good because you look back at all sorts of people who’ve been through similar processes and it’s a truism that you have to go through various elections and selections before you’re successful. It’s the battle and grind of it,” he says.

“I was delighted with the end result; it’s great to be representing Stoke.”

He has argued that the Staffordshire city should make the most of its famous but dwindling pottery industries and has criticised the local council’s decision to “try to obliterate the past, and sort of ‘cleanse’, removing the old bottle ovens and other relics”.

He says that his favourite era is 1750 to 1850 when the Industrial Revolution gave rise to great urban civilisations in Manchester, Liverpool and Stoke-on-Trent, creating with it a

“British identity”. “We have wonderful facilities in Stoke but they really need more money and support and talent drawn to them because everything is sucked into London,” he explains.

“A rebalancing of economic and cultural capacity across Britain is a strong priority for me, which is why the 19th century is so wonderful — there was a period of great equality across the country because of the industrial power that places such as Manchester and Birmingham had. They were places you really had to reckon with.”

He says that production of Spode [an English brand of pottery] is coming back to Stoke from China, but that skills shortages are a problem.

“You go into a pot bank and there’s no one there under 50. Thankfully all the local pottery firms are joining with the British Ceramic Confederation to work out a skills framework. Wedgwood has a good apprenticeship programme — we’re trying to push for that,” he says.

He says Stoke-on-Trent is a city where you can see “capacity and potential not being delivered”, because the right educational and skills results are not being achieved. “That’s a real social justice issue and is where governments can and should help,” he says.

“It’s where we can make a difference — that goes right through to children’s special educational needs, children in care. It’s fundamental to what being in Labour should be about.”

Correction

Readers often pick fault with a newspaper headline or standfirst, and sometimes their concerns are justified. Sometimes they’re not.

Either way, it’s usually the reporter’s ‘get out of jail free’ card that they’re not responsible for such elements of the newspaper — despite more often than not taking the irate reader’s phoned call, regardless.

There may have been no such phoned call for FE Week reporter Rebecca Cooney, but last week’s coverage of her day at Working Men’s College, in London, could well have elicited such a reaction.

Were that phoned call to have been made, though — over the extraneous ‘to’ in a standfirst that read ‘Rebecca Cooney went to ‘back to college’ . . .’ — then she could rightly have replied: “I didn’t write it.”

Have you spotted something wrong with this edition of FE Week?

If so, feel free to tell us about it, including the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is. Email us at news@feweek.co.uk with Corrections in the subject line.

Comment

Traineeships launched, but only for some

For me the restriction of this initiative to 16 to 19-year-olds is the first really tangible example of the damage done to the FE system of splitting 16-18 and 19+ funding systems.

It is so hard to fund 19+ work experience and traineeships were a possible way forward, but I think the complexities of making one programme work across two divergent funding systems just proved too difficult, so once again adults are disadvantaged.

Jerry White

I work for a grade three college. However, our employer responsive department received outstanding grades for all measures at the same inspection.

Our employer responsive delivery makes up almost 50 per cent of our funding and we consider it to be a huge strength. A shame, then, that we, as an outstanding department are unable to deliver traineeships as a grade three college.

I understand why the line has been drawn, but its inflexibility will disadvantage learners to whom we had planned on delivering traineeships.

Zac

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Or, you can write to us at FE Week, 161-165 Greenwich High Road, London SE10 8JA.

Full contact details should be provided and can be withheld by FE Week upon request.



# Consider all the options

The institutional bias towards a university education is unfair on young people, says Spencer Mehlman

I am not againt universities. They are incredible places for learning, with some of the most interesting and enthusiastic teachers you could ever meet. For many young people they will be the “right” next step. But the drive towards university that omits the raft of valid alternatives enrages me. That’s categorically unfair on young people and, for me, borders on a national scandal.

One statistic has shocked me more than any other during my time working with young people who are looking at their future careers. It didn’t make much of a noise in the press, but I believe that it reveals the extent of the problem young people are facing.

It was revealed in a City & Guilds survey that showed that in careers discussions 75 per cent of 14 to 19-year-olds had been told about university, while only 49 per cent had been told about apprenticeships and 48 per cent about other vocational qualifications.

“Parents will base their advice on their own experience but university is no longer a guaranteed ticket to a great career”

Who is to blame? I believe the genesis is from Tony Blair’s seemingly random pronouncement in 1999 that 50 per cent of 18 to 30-year-olds should experience higher education. No one has ever quite established why this 50 per cent target was so important, other than to note that it made for a choice soundtrack.

Since then (and arguably before), schools have promoted university education as the premier destination for their leavers. Against a backdrop of hugely inflated costs and rising graduate unemployment, the result is drop-out rates of anywhere up to 29 per cent.

What makes this all the more reprehensible is that the churn towards university continues despite study after study suggesting that continued education and qualifications in other non-university settings provide similar benefits in terms of earnings, employment and longevity.



And it’s not just our schools that are institutionally-biased towards universities. Parents too are to blame – in our experience, only a small enlightened proportion advise their children against going to university, or even make themselves aware of the alternatives. I appreciate that parents will base their advice on their own experience and on historic views, but the goalposts have most definitely shifted and university is no longer a guaranteed ticket to a great career.

So what is so alluring about the supposedly honeyed substance of university education that keeps schools and parents relentlessly spooning it to our young people? I believe that it’s confusion; it’s the ghost of a generational memory from a time when university was inspiring, intellectually elitist and probably much more fun. It’s also the negative perception of vocational qualifications (“aren’t they for plumbers?”) that results in an anachronistic snobbery that blinds people towards an honest evaluation of all the options.

Shamefully, the university experience these days will cost many students more than £50,000 . . . an investment that comes against a backdrop of graduate unemployment of 19 per cent.

How can we get this vital message out to the young people? How can we get the scales to drop from the eyes of parents, schools, careers advisers, headteachers, politicians and educationists alike and create a platform for all young people to learn about all valid “next steps” after school or college? I’d love your thoughts.

Spencer Mehlman owns [www.notgoingtouni.co.uk](http://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk).

# In search of a lost art

Curriculum design was a critical and well developed skill that FE staff once placed at the centre of their professional expertise, says Lynn Sedgmore. It’s time it was again...

The freedoms and flexibilities of New Challenges, New Changes and the more recent Rigour and Responsiveness in Skills, have given colleges greater opportunities to be responsive to the priorities of learners, employers and communities, stimulating them to review their curriculum offer as well as their current capacity for curriculum development and redesign.

Yet, in an environment where funding and quality assurance have been driven by a focus on qualification success rates, and where funding pressures have limited the appetite for experimentation and risk-taking, this capacity for curriculum development and redesign may often need to be rediscovered and redeveloped.

When I entered FE in the early 1980s, curriculum-led staff development and the art of curriculum design was a critical and well developed skill that we all placed at the centre of our professional expertise.

“A culture of innovation and experimentation, with a strategic commitment to give staff the time and resources needed to support curriculum change, are vital”

Recently I have heard many calls for a rediscovering of what this means in this period of autonomy and freedoms.

A recent 157 project, supported by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service, examined the challenges and opportunities facing FE colleges in amending and aligning their curriculum offer. It offers some insight from the experiences of seven college-based action research projects.

Responsive curriculum obviously needs to be based on the identified needs of the ‘curriculum-user’, that is, learners and/or employers. Multiple ways of engaging with curriculum users are vital to ensure training and skills needs are correctly identified, as well as to ensure deeper relationships with users to support effective and responsive curriculum development and delivery.

Many of the action research projects — looking at curriculum content, delivery



methods, infrastructure — highlighted developing staff capacity as the starting point for enabling effective change; staff need to have the necessary confidence and skills to be able to be innovative and make changes to current provision.

A culture of innovation and experimentation, with a strategic commitment to give staff the time and resources needed to support curriculum change, are vital.

As well as having a clear ‘plan’ for their curriculum initiatives, with objectives and expected outcomes, many colleges adopted a whole-college approach, ensuring that the changes were perceived as a definite organisational strategy, with common approaches/ protocols across all areas.

As well as supporting the development of staff capacity to innovate, the action research projects also highlighted that colleges need to critically review their structures, including their staff contracts, staff utilisation protocols and cross-college communications, to develop mechanisms that enable them to identify and respond to needs in a more timely way with high quality provision.

This may involve implementing a range of ‘solutions’, including developing new roles for staff, developing effective cross-college links and supporting improved relations with external partners and stakeholders.

With government drives to coordinate skills planning at local and regional levels, curriculum development and redesign may become more complicated, possibly requiring multiple providers to work together to plan and develop an area’s curriculum.

The 157 Group is keen to work with others to support curriculum change and to support the sector in responding to the clear challenges of demonstrating responsiveness and accountability to learners, employers and communities.

Lynne Sedgmore, executive director of the 157 Group

# Finding the right blend

It’s early days for massive open online courses (Moocs), but do they have a role in FE, asks Peter Kilcoyne

Funding cuts have had an impact on staffing levels at Worcester College of Technology (WCT) as in most FE institutions.

As a result we decided early on to develop our online learning provision so that we could continue to offer high quality learning, despite tighter budgets.

The debate around Moocs — which I spoke about last month at the ConnectEd conference in London for online learning specialists — has piqued my interest as we already have a strong online learning presence.

In fact, we are delivering two models of blended learning that I believe have important lessons for the sector.

The first of these is the adult enterprise model, based on 50:50 blended learning.

It is allowing learners at 30 providers around the country to gain OCN qualifications with all of them accessing a common learning platform.

Content is written by subject experts and ‘e-learnified’ by the content development team at WCT.

The large number of providers funding online content development means that it is of far higher quality than one college

could achieve.

And learners benefit from the courses’ flexibility as they have to participate in only half as many face-to-face teaching sessions as they would through a traditional model.

This is particularly useful for people who want to start their own businesses with a number of demands on their time.

“The classic Mooc model of one or a small group of tutors supporting thousands of learners is, in my view, not appropriate for FE”

Our second model is personally accountable learning (PAL). Fifteen per cent of all full-time level two and level three courses are delivered online through PAL packs.

These are generally Moodle-based courses containing learning content, learning activi-

# LEPs can articulate the needs of business



The 39 local enterprise partnerships really do want to raise skill and employability levels as a fundamental to driving local growth, says David Frost

Perhaps one of the most dispiriting aspects of working with local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) is that skills and employability feature at the top of all of their agendas. But if the 39 LEPs are to have

responsibility for driving growth, they will be hampered if they do not raise skill levels, particularly employability skills, in their areas.

Why is this dispiriting? Because we have spent billions trying to resolve it. We had a huge focus in the decade to 2007, but much went on before this. A litany of agencies and acronyms: the training boards, the MSC; The TECs; the LSC — and all the others in between.

All were supposedly set up to resolve the endless mismatch between the skills that employers needed and what was being provided locally, and a real concern that many young people were leaving education deeply unprepared for the world of work.

We seem to have made little progress on this central issue.

LEPs, after a slow start, are now very much the focus of the drive to promote growth. Lord Heseltine’s report, No stone unturned, gave real stimulus to the LEP network.

This was further built on by the Autumn statement in December and the Budget in the spring of this year. LEPs are the only game in town at present in respect of economic development.

What is clear is that the business and civic leaders understand the scale of the skills issue; they know that it is too late to sort these problems when a young person is 18.

There is a need to work in schools, just as there is a need for flexible and high quality

ties and assessment activities.

Teachers are supported in building the packs by WCT’s information and learning technology and study centre staff. Where possible, we use embedded video content from, for example, YouTube, TED or open educational resources already available on the internet, so reducing preparation time for teachers.

Since implementing this model of delivery alongside a number of other changes under new principal Stuart Laverick, overall college success figures have improved 2 to 4 per cent, proving that we are maintaining and even improving on our provision.

Does this mean Moocs can have similar levels of success?

Moocs are popular in higher education and have been generating a lot of excitement. However, the classic Mooc model of one or a small group of tutors supporting thousands of learners is, in my view, not appropriate for FE. Learners in our sector need far more support than can be offered through such a delivery model.

Blended learning models work as students still get face-to-face support and classroom-based teaching, something that is not available from your standard Mooc.

I do see it may have some uses though, perhaps for additional activities for A-level

work experience. There is a need for impartial and quality careers advice, which will be delivered in an increasingly non-traditional way. And there is a need to market the benefits of increasingly high quality apprenticeships.

“FE will have to show the added value it is giving to young people in return for the substantial levels of funding that providers continue to receive”

Too many young school-leavers go on to higher education, which is not providing them with the opportunities that they were led to believe would result from choosing this route.

That is why employers have become such strong advocates for the University Technical Colleges and, increasingly, the studio schools that are sprouting up across the country.



students to stretch their learning or even for staff who can undertake further study as part of their professional development.

But, for me, our work at WCT provides good evidence that blended learning alongside strong face-to-face support can deliver an exciting learning experience that engages students, improves flexibility and helps us to deliver “more for less” in the present challenging funding environment; without the need for Moocs.

Peter Kilcoyne, ILT director at Worcester College of Technology

FE has a vital role to play in an era of greater focus on vocational education. Equally, FE will have to show the added value it is giving to young people in return for the substantial levels of funding that providers continue to receive. LEPs will have a deep interest in whether course provision is geared to the needs of employers and whether there is a real understanding by management within colleges, of local business and employer skill needs over the coming years.

This will have to be more than LEPs having a seat on a college governing body and more than an FE principal being on the LEP board.

We are at a crossroads. We have a real opportunity to make a once in a lifetime change. LEPs can articulate the needs of business in respect of skills. They can then influence local provision – and they should be able to do this through financial levers and the single pot.

But they must be deeply engaged with business themselves, all business. They have to encourage companies to train and they have to lead and co-ordinate provision.

I know that the 39 LEPs are up for this challenge and really do want to raise skill and employability levels as a fundamental to driving local growth. We move at increasing pace towards a very interesting future.

David Frost, chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership Network



# Minister beams over college enterprise

It's early days in the new relationship between FE and local enterprise partnerships, but how they will now work together was the centre of discussion at a London conference. Chris Henwood reports

Further education and its place at the centre of local “entrepreneurial ecosystems” was the theme of a conference organised by the Gazelle Colleges Group.

Skills Minister Matthew Hancock, Confederation of British Industry director general John Cridland and Pearson UK president Rod Bristow were among the speakers.

There was also representation from local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) with Dr Ann Limb, chair of the South East Midlands LEP (pictured below), addressing the conference, with David Frost, chair of the LEP Network.

More than 100 delegates, from colleges up and down the country, were at the event, held in the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) base in central London on Tuesday, May 14.

Mr Hancock said: “Enterprise needs to be embedded in the way a college operates. We have provided freedoms and flexibilities to give autonomy to leaders.

“I want to see strong leaders with strong governance and, of course, held to account firmly by Ofsted and the searchlight of accountability and data and publication of results.

“That enterprise will improve results on the ground rather than a system where the minister tries to dictate what happens.”

Dr Limb, a former principal and chief executive of Milton Keynes College and Cambridge Regional College, spoke on strengthening FE relationship with LEPs. “The big issue is how you work with employers to get them to demand training and skills that can be delivered for their benefit, for the benefit of the individual and for the benefit of the country

as a whole,” she said.

She added: “LEPs and FE have some real opportunities working together and yes, we’ve got to develop that relationship first. Obviously, LEPs are the body of the moment — only three years old, or thereabouts. They are responsible for setting strategies for driving economic growth.

“We will have the majority of EU structural funds starting next year allocated to us. Therefore it will give FE the opportunity to work with LEPs to dip into those funds.”

## “Enterprise needs to be embedded in the way a college operates”

A summary paper from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, with the 157 Group and Gazelle, was handed out for consultation.

It said that the three believed “that to create an environment where colleges and businesses truly engage requires a step change by both colleges and business”.

Among the questions the paper posed were ‘what are the big strategic changes required to enable colleges and businesses to build a long term and sustainable working relationship at a local, regional and national level?’

Visit [www.ukces.org.uk/fe\\_business](http://www.ukces.org.uk/fe_business) by June 30 to respond to the paper.



Skills Minister Matthew Hancock



Picture courtesy of Gazelle Group



Pearson UK president Rob Bristow and CBI director general John Cridland

## Q&A with Dr Ann Limb

**Does the adult skills budget need to be ring-fenced to protect it from spending on other LEP concerns?**

Protection is perhaps not the verb I would use. Does the plan that the LEP produces — the strategic plan, the skills plan, the inward investment plan — ensure that adult skills training is at the heart of what it does, is the way I would phrase it.

If it does, then the money will flow to that need. So certainly adult skills training needs to be included and all LEPs would do that because the workforce that we have at the moment needs to have greater skills than it's got and that's what employers tell us.

**Should FE representation on LEP boards be mandatory?**

If you start to mandate anything, you move away from the kind of entrepreneurial, innovative arrangements that should be in the DNA of the way we do things.

The education sector is a board member of my LEP and I certainly think you must have a local and national asset on the board. The way to do it is to regard the FE sector as a key public sector player and just have them there automatically, which is what we do.

**Is there a danger that LEPs could see responsibility for skills as a hindrance?**

Absolutely not. The skills issues are as critical as infrastructure issues to the success of UK plc. The LEPs are driven by the need to create jobs, to create new businesses, and to create homes for people to live in — just putting money into infrastructure will not deliver that. There is a separate governance arrangement now, a local transportation body, that oversees the infrastructure arrangements across a LEP.

That will have its money to deal with that. My LEP has a housing delivery fund and I would see us having a skills delivery fund — each fund earmarked for activities that are equally important.

# ‘Qualifications don’t produce good teachers’

The new teaching and training qualifications for the FE sector dominated discussion at the latest Westminster Education Forum last Thursday. Shane Mann reports

Changes in sector regulations were outlined in the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) report last month entitled Teaching and Training Qualifications for the Further Education and Skills Sector in England.

It also introduced new teaching qualifications that awarding organisations and higher education institutions are devising for introduction in September.

Discussion of these changes and what they mean for teaching standards were examined by an FE sector panel made up of Martin Doel, chief executive of the Association of Colleges, Rob Wye, LSIS chief executive, Norman Crowther, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers' national official for post-16 education, Ian Pryce, principal and chief executive, Bedford College and Sue Crowley, chair, non-executive board, Institute for Learning (IfL).

Mr Wye started the session by discussing the changes.

“It is clear from our research that excellent teaching and learning is dependent on excellent teacher training and excellent additional CPD,” he said.

“One of the findings in the Lingfield review was that the structure of qualifications for teachers and trainers was too complex; that it needed revisiting and reformulating. LSIS has undertaken this work in recent months and has found that what employers actually wanted was a simple structure that meets their needs. That is what has

been developed.”

Mr Doel commended LSIS for its work, saying: “Teaching standards and qualifications are not an end in themselves.

“I think they’re actually a very useful thing, but I do believe that they don’t need to be mandatory. I am certain that the guild will take LSIS’s work forward on that basis. The flexibility of the qualifications produced is useful as a benchmark to aim for, and for employers.”

## “I want my students to be taught by the most skilled people that I can find”

He added that teaching qualifications “do not produce nor guarantee good teaching and student outcomes”.

“Good teaching is necessary but not a sufficient condition for guaranteed good student outcomes,” he said.

“It’s a pre-eminent part of what colleges and providers could and should provide in terms of good student outcomes.

“There is a difference between occupational and professional expertise as a teacher. There are complex support systems within colleges — learner tracking, engagement of industry and knowledge management — which are all important and critical to student outcomes.”

Ms Crowley said that practitioners wanted teaching qualifications to remain mandatory.

“We consulted widely with our membership and they were clear that they want an entitlement to teacher qualifications and they would be happy that regulations were maintained,” she said.

“It’s important that we think about whether you need to be qualified. How will those that come in to the profession feel when working



Sue Crowley, chair, non-executive board, Institute for Learning



Rob Wye, LSIS chief executive and Ian Pryce, principal and chief executive, Bedford College



alongside those that have qualifications? Will they have a second-class status? I don’t know of another profession where regulations for qualifications have been revoked. It’s quite remarkable.”

However, Mr Pryce argued that the sector should focus more on the vocational skill of the individual; whether a candidate could teach or not should be up to individual organisations, not the government.

“I want my students to be taught by the most skilled people I can find, I don’t want the government to be involved at all because the quality of my staff is a matter for my organisation and it’s a source of competitive advantage,” he said.

“The idea that the government tells me I can employ people that have certain qualifications actually offends me. The government

should look at our outputs not our inputs.

“I also don’t understand why the taxpayer should be expected to fund professional qualifications for teachers. And why we allow awarding bodies that are not professional teaching bodies to create them. We need to be attractive to those highly skilled bricklayers and engineers and have to be able to convert people from industry into teaching without them losing time or money. That dual professionalism is the jewel in our crown.

“In our sector we have a compliance model of continuing professional development, whereas the Quality Assurance Agency talks about scholarly activity and people doing research. It’s a continuum and we’re on the wrong end. We’re fixated at the CPD end, we’ve got to shift that focus and stop counting hours.”



Martin Doel, chief executive of the AoC



# FE Week campus round-up

## Minister visits new £33m campus



First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones, Coleg Gwent deputy principal Guy Lacey and plumbing student Tori Lee, 18, at the new campus

It was a day of firsts when the leader of the Welsh government visited a new £33m campus. First Minister Carwyn Jones met the first learners to study at Coleg Gwent's state-of-the-art Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone.

As well as construction, the campus, which opened in March, offers courses in art, media, IT and independent living skills.

Mr Jones said: "The investment in this new facility aims to improve learners' experiences

and choices, as well as provide greater access, increased participation and improved standards. Many of these aims are already being achieved just months after it opened its doors.

"We want places of learning in Wales to inspire learners of all abilities. It is clear from the enthusiasm of the students and the wider community that this new Learning Zone is doing just that."

## Branching out in business



Tree's a crowd: Andrew Plester and Graham Bird

Two Warwickshire College students are proving that they can cut it in the world of business after opening their own tree surgery company.

Andrew Plester and Graham Bird launched P and B Tree Services last month with advice and support from the college's enterprise board.

And they've already turned 75 per cent of their quotes into contracts.

The students met in 2011 when they started a level three extended diploma in forestry and arboriculture.

Andrew, 29, said: "I always had ambitions to set up my own business but didn't realise how much support we'd receive from the college."

Graham, 19, said: "Not only has the college enabled us to gain our qualifications to become professional tree surgeons, it's given us the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge needed to run our own enterprise.

"We're really excited about running P and B Tree Services full-time after we finish college this summer."

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Dudley College photography students with Martin Parr. From left: Ruth Gadd, Gina Ho, Charlotte Coddling, all 18, Laura Kennet and Lizzie Dunn, both 17

## Magnum head shares his skills

More than 100 photography, art and media students at Dudley College had a rare treat when documentary and art photographer Martin Parr, UK head of the Magnum Photo Agency, talked about his experiences and work over the past 30 years.

He described how photography had changed since the 1970s and how his career had been driven by passion.

"By being obsessive, you strive to be better than anyone else; you look for more

interesting subjects and take more pictures. You might need to take a lot of bad pictures to get a really good one," he told students.

Ben Gamble, Dudley College manager for art, design and media, said: "It was a privilege to have Martin share his work and experiences with our students.

"This is one of the many ways we give our learners a competitive edge and exposure to the realities of working in a creative industry."



Central College Nottingham principal Malcolm Cowgill (left) and vice principal David Drury looking over plans for the college's £70m new build

## Aiming high in Nottingham's centre

A football pitch on the roof and science labs that will focus on low carbon technology are just two of the features of Central College Nottingham's proposed £70m city centre base.

The building is planned for the Broadmarsh East area of the city and is expected to take up to five years to complete.

The relevant authorities are currently discussing funding, planning and logistics.

The planned six-storey centre, which has the capacity for 4,000 students, will focus on science, technology, engineering and maths,

and will include labs looking at low carbon technology and an all-weather pitch on the roof.

Principal Malcolm Cowgill said: "The new build is part of our long-term ambition to improve education and progression to employment in Nottingham.

"This links to the college's new name, Central [formerly South Nottingham College], revolving around a 'hub and spoke' strategy; a central hub — the flagship Nottingham City base — with a number of spoke centres of learning around Nottinghamshire."

# 'At last things are looking up for me'

FEATURED  
CAMPUS  
ROUND-UP



## A prizewinning student tells Rebecca Cooney how an adult education college is helping her to achieve her dream

A mum-of-two who fled political unrest in Eritrea and studied English to try to fulfil her lifelong ambition to become a nurse has earned the Building Life Skills Through ESOL prize as part of Adult Learners' Week.

Aster Ghebreyesus (pictured), 40, came to the UK in 1998 determined to become a nurse. But her English wasn't good enough and she found work as a bus driver.

But after a health scare forced her to rethink her future, she seized the opportunity to pursue her dream and enrolled on a course at London's Morley College.

"When I had my daughter I discovered that I had a heart problem and that sooner or later I would have to have an operation and wouldn't be able to do my bus driving job afterwards. I had to do something to secure a job after my operation and that's why I started studying ESOL," she said.

"It's made a big difference to me — it's a totally different experience when you're learning rather than just speaking to other people.

"You get experience from the people in the

class as well, because everyone is learning from each other."

Aster left Eritrea in 1991 and was separated from most of her family when the country gained independence from Ethiopia.

"My dad had campaigned for Eritrea and Ethiopia to stay united so they arrested him on independence day and we couldn't stay any more," she said.

Initially she went to Ethiopia, but when border tensions between the two countries flared in 1998, the Ethiopian authorities attempted to deport her and, unable to return to Eritrea, she moved to Kenya and then to the UK. She now lives in Lewisham, south London.

She said: "Since I was a child I wanted to be a nurse but my father halted my ambitions.

"So when I came here I was determined to do it, but I found it hard without English. Now that I have my children I decided this was the right time."

Within a year of enrolling on the level one course at Morley in September 2010, Aster was able to start an introductory course that combined nursing and midwifery with further English and maths. In September last year she was accepted on to Morley's one-year pre-access to nursing and midwifery programme.

"I felt so happy when I found out I'd been accepted... I'm really enjoying my course," she said. "I still find working on my writing

skills challenging, but the ESOL and introductory courses have definitely helped and I feel that I'm making good progress."

Morley principal, Ela Piotrowska, said: "Aster has achieved a great deal during her time here.

"She is a dedicated, hard-working student and a great inspiration to others.

"Her achievements and passion for learning make her popular among her tutors

and fellow students, and have inspired her family and friends."

Aster will collect her award at a ceremony on Thursday.

She said: "Studying has been really helpful to me and I'm very glad I've won this award, I'm excited.

"At last things are looking up for me and I can see myself and my children having a better future."

## Balls backs book on stammering



Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls with City Lit speech and language therapist Jan Logan

Shadow Chancellor Ed Balls dropped in on London adult college City Lit to launch a new book on stammering therapy.

Mr Balls, who has a stammer, had been interviewed by City Lit speech and language therapist Jan Logan for a chapter in Stammering Therapy from the Inside – New Perspectives on Working with Young People and Adults.

Mr Balls said: "I hope this book full of personal stories will help to raise awareness

and understanding of some of the challenges stammerers face every day.

"With the right help and support, we know that children and adults can deal with their stammer and do well in whatever walk of life they choose."

The book was edited by City Lit speech and language therapy tutors Carolyn Cheasman and Rachel Everard, and independent therapist Sam Simpson.



Salford City College chef Stuart Fraser

## Double helpings for trainee chef

A trainee chef studying at Salford City College's Walkden Sixth Form Centre has been offered jobs at two high profile restaurants.

Stuart Fraser has been offered posts at London restaurant Hix and at Sam's Chop House in Manchester. The 18-year-old level three hospitality and culinary arts student, from Lower Broughton, impressed chef Mark Hix during a fortnight's work experience at

his flagship West End eaterie in the capital. The Manchester offer followed soon after.

Lee Allsup, head of hospitality and culinary arts, said: "This is a fantastic achievement by Stuart — to have received two offers of employment from two high quality restaurants is just brilliant.

"I know he is still considering both offers, but I am sure he will excel in whichever he chooses."

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# FE Week campus round-up



Rhiannon Lloyd, Laura-Jane Gregory and Jessie Doyle

## ‘Love and loss’ film wins award

The tale of a boy who jumps in and out of a newspaper before dying helped three media students win best animation at the Staffordshire Film Festival.

Solihull College 18-year-olds Laura-Jane Gregory, Rhiannon Lloyd and Jessie Doyle developed the idea from the opening credits of Russell Howard’s Good News television programme.

Their two-minute film, One More Day (with you), took four months to complete.

Laura-Jane said it aimed to highlight the importance and value of spending time with siblings. “We really wanted to connect with the audience and decided that featuring a child was the way to do this,” she said.

“The decision to end the story with the boy dying was brave, but we wanted to highlight love and loss.”

The girls are currently completing extended diplomas in creative media production in media (TV and Film) at the college.



South Cheshire College travel and tourism students Emma Fiddes, Jamie Reilly, both 19, and Lauren Blainey, 18, promoting India as a holiday destination

## Diners get their fill of India

Cheshire foodies got more than a culinary taste of India when hospitality and catering students teamed up with travel and tourism events management learners.

A spicy four-course meal was backed up with holiday destination promotions during an Indian-themed night at South Cheshire College’s Restaurant on the Crescent.

Chefs from Bombay Restaurant in Crewe oversaw hospitality and catering students as they sent dishes, including onion bhajis and chicken tikka balti, out to more than 35 guests.

Bombay chef Raz Hoque said: “This was something completely different for us. We look forward to working with the college again in the future.”

Chef lecturer Shane Guildford said: “It was great for our students to work with chefs from one of the best Indian restaurants in the area. It gave them the chance to serve different food dishes under expert guidance.”

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## Students make their mark in Bracknell



Bracknell & Wokingham College art students in front of the mural they painted for children from Wooden Hill Primary School (also pictured)

Art students from Bracknell & Wokingham College have made the drawings of local primary schoolchildren into a permanent mural on a town underpass.

Students painted the mural, designed by children from Wooden Hill Infant School, after their original drawing, printed on to a plastic coating material stuck to the underpass, began to peel off.

College art tutor Jan Allen said: “The school wanted the images to stay almost as the children had designed them with a little bit of refining. The students each worked on a specific area, but the images retain that child-like look.”

Every year BTec art students at the college complete a community art unit where they design and develop work to be used locally.

Bracknell councillor Mary Temperton, who originally contacted the college to ask for help on the project, said: “College art students helped restore the faith of young art pupils.”

## Learning to juggle home and work



Back, from left: Samantha and Lacey Norris, 2; Natalie Davies and Caysey Brooks, 2; and Amy and Olivia Mason, 3 (centre). Front, from left: Bethany Sutton and Grace Bowling, 1; and Chelsea and Lyla Stringfellow, 2

A local college is helping five young Bolton mums to balance home life and career development.

Bethany Sutton, 18, Samantha Norris and Natalie Davies, both 19, and Amy Mason and Chelsea Stringfellow, both 20, are all enrolled on courses with Bury College.

Their studies include work at Bolton’s Rosehill Nursery — where their children are cared for.

They have all completed qualifications in children and young people’s workforce and creative crafts, and have now moved up qualification levels.

They study for one day a week with their Bury tutor and do three days a week work experience at the nursery.

Samantha said: “I found juggling work and a young child hard; however, it was rewarding to receive my certificates.

“Being around other young parents is good because they can relate to how I am feeling.

“I’m looking forward to completing level three and going on to university as I would like to be a primary school teacher.”

### Myerscough College

Bilsborrow, Preston. Lancashire PR3 0RY

#### Vice Principal (and Deputy Chief Executive)

Salary circa £75k-£85k plus relocation package and benefits

Further details about the role are available on the College website or, for an informal discussion about the post, please contact Ann Turner, Chief Executive & Principal on 01995 642201 or email [aturner@myerscough.ac.uk](mailto:aturner@myerscough.ac.uk).

Closing date for applications Monday 10 June 2013 with interviews to be held in the College on 24 & 25 June 2013.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expect all staff to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.

### The North West centre for land-based and sports education

#### Are you innovative, inspiring with high expectations?

Myerscough is a thriving specialist further and higher education college, situated near Preston in Lancashire with centres across the North West of England and a turnover of £27m. Specialising in land based and sports provision with national recruitment, Myerscough is ambitious for its learners with an overarching mission of Providing Opportunities for All to Succeed.

Further Education learner numbers exceed 2,500 with over 1,200 apprentices nationwide. FE results have improved significantly in the last three years to be the leading specialist college in the country (2011/12) and within the top 5% of all colleges nationally, alongside national success in the sporting arena. The College is an Associate School of UCLan with extensive research activity underpinning provision for 1,300 HE learners.

We are now seeking an enthusiastic Vice Principal who will be responsible for shaping the development and future direction of the curriculum for Further & Higher Education and our work based delivery.

The successful candidate will be passionate about teaching, learning and the student experience with the necessary skills and imagination to lead the innovative development of the curriculum and deliver an outstanding student experience. The VP will be results driven with the leadership and management experience to influence internal and external stakeholders and motivate and inspire staff. This is a fantastic opportunity for an experienced and inspirational leader with a strong educational background to join a forward looking, dynamic senior leadership team and help deliver the ambitious strategic plan.

[www.myerscough.ac.uk](http://www.myerscough.ac.uk)

## Career Opportunities

### Canterbury College

We are a Further and Higher Education College in the heart of Kent with around 10,000 students across 500 courses. Our £50m Campus is home to nearly 800 staff and we have great career opportunities which may be right for you.

.....

#### Manager of Higher Education & Access to Higher Education (Business & Technology) ref: 11/61

37 hours a week, salary starting at £35,408  
Evening and weekend work may be necessary

We are seeking a Manager with experience of higher education in colleges and a strong commitment to improving teaching and learning, enhancing student satisfaction and increasing success rates. This management role requires complex timetabling and planning skills, with the ability to motivate and performance manage a team of lecturers. The person we are looking for will have an understanding of current HE in FE quality and standards and be able to work effectively both cross-College and with university partners.

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#### Closing date: Tuesday 21st May 2013 at 12 noon

For an information pack please call the Human Resources Office quoting the above reference or visit our web site.

#### Staff benefits include:

- Pension & Life Assurance Scheme
- Close to City Centre
- Sports Hall & Gym
- Generous Holiday Allowance

[www.canterburycollege.ac.uk/newjobs](http://www.canterburycollege.ac.uk/newjobs)

01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone)

Canterbury College is an equal opportunities employer

## Turn over for more opportunities

## Head of faculty - Business and Social Science

### Maidstone Campus

- Salary circa £46,119
- Attractive benefits package

#### Are you INNOVATIVE, INSPIRING and DYNAMIC?

MidKent College is a large and successful College operating on two main campuses serving Medway and Maidstone. The College was graded ‘good’ overall with ‘outstanding’ Capacity to Improve at its last Ofsted inspection. Since then, success rates have continued to rise and the College achieved its best ever results in 2012. The College benefits from having outstanding financial strength and a management team committed to ensuring that all students enjoy an exceptional learning experience.

Following the retirement of the current post holder, MidKent College requires a committed, inspirational and enthusiastic leader for the well-established Faculty of Business and Social Sciences at our Maidstone Campus. Within the newly developed campus, with state of the art facilities, the Faculty includes A Levels, Access, Business and IT. This is an ideal opportunity for a dynamic and progressive individual who would like the challenge of leading an already successful Faculty to even greater things.

To apply for this position please contact [job.applications@midkent.ac.uk](mailto:job.applications@midkent.ac.uk) for an application pack.

**Closing Date Midday 23rd May 2013**  
**Interviews will take place w/c 3rd June 2013**

MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer





To apply for the advertised position, or find details of any other vacancies, please go to [www.dearne-coll.ac.uk](http://www.dearne-coll.ac.uk)

## Quality Manager - Subcontracted Provision

Ref: HR60. £35,494 per annum.  
37 hours per week.

To ensure the quality and continuous improvement of subcontracted provision.

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All posts are subjected to an Enhanced DBS Disclosure.  
Closing date for applications: Thursday 6th June 2013.

[www.dearne-coll.ac.uk](http://www.dearne-coll.ac.uk)



## To advertise with us call Shane Mann on 020 8123 4891





### Management Information Systems Manager

£40,163 per annum (full time – 36 hours per week)

The Management Information Systems Manager will have the drive and creativity to develop and implement a comprehensive review of management information within the College. They will manage their team to provide accurate and accessible information to support College managers in order to drive quality, maximize potential funding, and maintain high standards.






To find more information on the college itself, view the job description and person specification and to apply online please go to [www.northern.ac.uk](http://www.northern.ac.uk). To receive a postal application form please contact the Personnel department on **01226 776000**.

Application forms must be submitted by **10am on Monday 10 June**. Interviews to be held on **Thursday 4 July**.

The Northern College is committed to safeguarding and promotes the welfare of all learners and expects all staff to share this commitment.

We are an equal opportunities employer, applications are particularly welcome from disabled, black and minority ethnic groups as they are currently under represented within our staff.

Registered Charity Number 507245





NCC Skills is a highly successful private training company and a leading provider of English and Maths qualifications for Adults in England. We work in partnership with Further Education colleges and employers to engage with learners who have not yet achieved basic levels of literacy and numeracy. We are expanding and are seeking to recruit an Office Manager and Regional Manager.

### Office Manager

Harpenden

£35,000 to £40,000

We are looking to recruit a highly experienced and dynamic Manager for our offices in Harpenden. This key pivotal role is to manage two in-house teams; Telemarketing and Administration, whilst also acting as a key point of reference for our field based delivery teams, employers and college partners.

### Regional Manager

Field Based

£35,000

We are now looking to recruit a Regional Manager to manage and support a team of field based Tutors in the delivery of NCC Skills programmes. Working as part of the Quality Management team and reporting to the Head of Quality & Delivery, this role is key in creating and supporting a culture of excellence and maintaining quality of provision.

Potential candidates should apply via email to [Amanda.fisher@ncc.ac.uk](mailto:Amanda.fisher@ncc.ac.uk) with a covering letter and CV.

For enterprising education and training opportunities that really work



### Managing Director - Achievement Training (Ref: 078B)

Full-time - c. £50,000

We are looking for a highly motivated and inspirational leader to drive this Plymouth-based private training provider onto outstanding. Reporting to the Board, you will lead a team of 100 plus staff offering a range of educational and vocational provision, including Apprenticeships.

This is a strategic position, requiring a learner-centred focus and commitment to further strengthening excellent teaching, learning and assessment. With a sound knowledge of further education and work-based learning, you will have significant and demonstrable management experience at Director level, and a proven track record of leading an organisation through change.


For an informal discussion, please contact Nicola Cove on **01752 305396**. Further details can be found at [www.achievementtraining.com](http://www.achievementtraining.com). Closing date: **Monday 27 May** Interview date: **Monday 10 and Tuesday 11 June**

City College Plymouth is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

- The College is an equal opportunities employer



## Associate Consultants



FE Associates is recognised as a highly successful major supplier of interim management and consultancy support for curriculum, finance, MIS, IT and funding in the post-16 sector.


We are looking to strengthen our team of self-employed associate consultants in all subject areas and are inviting applications from suitably qualified professionals with recent college experience at Head of Department level or above.

You will have a strong track record in your field, be motivated, flexible and conversant with the issues facing FE. You must be prepared to travel and stay away from home when required. In return we offer competitive remuneration and a friendly support from our office team.




Closing date for applications is Tuesday 28th May 2013. Interviews will take place week commencing Monday 10th June 2013.

To apply, please email your CV to [recruitment@feassociates.com](mailto:recruitment@feassociates.com) or upload it via our website <http://www.feassociates.com/ja.html>

### One sector...Many questions...One solution - FE Associates



[www.feassociates.com](http://www.feassociates.com)



### Buxton and Leek College, part of University of Derby

## Great people, original thinking, inspiring individuals – changing lives.

### Head of Information Systems and Administration

Maximum of £52,000 per annum + bonus • Ref: LB0011

Here at the University of Derby we are in the business of creating opportunities to transform lives - we aim to be the ambitious student's natural choice for quality, support and achievement - would you like to help us achieve this?

**A NEW College and a unique challenge!**

**The Role:** We are looking for an experienced and dynamic manager to form part of the College's Senior Leadership team. Reporting directly to the Principal, you will lead and manage MIS and administrative support teams, covering: Information Systems; Funding, Planning, Records; Examinations and General Administration, to ensure delivery of an effective, efficient and integrated service to managers, teachers and students. You will also act as the primary liaison with central University services.

You will have significant management and technical/computing experience within an MIS role, leading staff teams and deploying resources, developing technical solutions and taking responsibility for decisions. In addition you will have in depth knowledge of FE funding methodologies and demonstrable experience of developing and maintaining student record systems and processes either within an F.E. and/or H.E environment.

**The Context:** Buxton and Leek Colleges merged on 1st August 2012 to form an exciting new entity within the University of Derby Group. Combined, we have almost 4,000 students and revenue of almost £10m. The new College is designed to strengthen the FE brand in the region and to take full advantage of a co-ordinated approach to provision, to the greater benefit of students, communities and employers.

Operating as a single college, the new institution operates from sites at both Buxton and Leek and also has provision based within the University of Derby. Buxton and Leek College is in the process of developing a new independent identity. At the same time it embodies the Values of the University of Derby Group with particular regard to Quality, Valuing People, Customer Focus, Opportunity and Openness and Challenge and Innovation.

**If you would like an informal discussion about the post please contact Len Tildsley, Principal, via [l.tildsley@derby.ac.uk](mailto:l.tildsley@derby.ac.uk) or by telephone 01538 398866.**

Closing date: 31 May 2013 Interview date: 20 June 2013

**For further information and to apply on-line visit our website [www.derby.ac.uk/jobs](http://www.derby.ac.uk/jobs)**

minicomp: 01332 591685

**Valuing diversity, promoting equality** [www.derby.ac.uk/jobs](http://www.derby.ac.uk/jobs)

FE Week publication dates May - July 2013							
	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
May	13 EDITION 66	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20 EDITION 67	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30	31	June 1	2
	3 EDITION 68	4	5	6	7		8
	10 EDITION 69	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17 EDITION 70	18	19	20	21	22	23
	24 EDITION 71	25	26	27	28	29	30
July	1 EDITION 72	2	3	4	5	6	7

## BUY ONE GET ONE FREE

### GET TWO INSERTIONS FOR THE PRICE OF ONE

Call Shane Mann on **020 81234 778** to place your advert



T&Cs: Free insertion will be placed in consecutive editions and must be for the same role. Changes to artwork are permitted.



# Introducing apt awards

the new trading name for Open College Network South West Region (OCNSWR)

Apt awards is an independent national Awarding Organisation, regulated by Ofqual to develop and offer national qualifications on the Qualifications and Credit Framework, and licensed by the QAA to award the Access to Higher Education Diploma.

Apt awards works with a wide range of national and local organisations, including FE colleges, adult and community education centres, schools, and employers.

The apt awards qualification and accreditation service includes:



**Plymouth Office**  
15 Research Way, Tamar Science  
Park, Plymouth PL6 8BT  
Call 01752 831500

info@aptawards.org.uk

**Cheltenham Office**  
122 Bath Road, Cheltenham,  
Gloucestershire, GL53 7JX  
Call 01242 225511

www.aptaawards.org.uk

Apt awards is the new  
trading name for Open  
College Network South  
West Region (OCNSWR)



Apt awards is proud to be a certified  
social enterprise with the Social Enterprise  
Mark, recognising our commitment to  
reinvesting profits to benefit our learners  
and the wider community.

## FE Week Sudoku challenge

		9	1	2	7	3		
5		1				2		4
2				8				7
	8		3		4		6	
4				5				3
7		3				4		9
		4	7	6	2	1		

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

How to play: Fill in all  
blank squares making  
sure that each row,  
column and 3 by 3 box  
contains the numbers  
1 to 9

Solutions: Next week

					4	8		3
			6	8				
	2			3			9	4
	1				6			5
		8				3		
4			3					7
2	3			1				6
				5	9			
5		7	4					

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

## Last Week's solutions

4	3	9	6	2	8	5	1	7
2	7	5	9	3	1	6	8	4
8	6	1	5	4	7	3	2	9
6	9	8	4	7	3	2	5	1
1	5	3	8	9	2	7	4	6
7	4	2	1	6	5	9	3	8
9	1	7	2	5	4	8	6	3
5	8	6	3	1	9	4	7	2
3	2	4	7	8	6	1	9	5

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

4	6	1	5	3	7	2	8	9
7	3	5	2	9	8	6	4	1
8	9	2	1	6	4	5	7	3
6	5	7	4	8	1	9	3	2
3	1	4	7	2	9	8	6	5
2	8	9	6	5	3	4	1	7
5	4	3	8	1	2	7	9	6
9	7	6	3	4	5	1	2	8
1	2	8	9	7	6	3	5	4

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

## FE Week mini-mascot

Follow the adventures of *FE Week's*  
biggest and smallest fan!



*"Mostly this week I've been a  
backseat driver"*

You can also follow our *FE Week* mini-mascot  
on Twitter @daniellinford